

REMARKS

Claims 19 and 26-28 are pending and stand rejected in the Office Action. Claims 19, 27, and 28 have been amended to more clearly recite the claimed invention. Support for the amendments is found in the specification as originally filed, for example, in the Table on page 5 of the specification. No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraphs, as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

Applicants have amended claim 27 thereby overcoming the rejection. Applicants respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraphs, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement.

Applicants have amended claim 28 thereby overcoming the rejection. Applicants respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 19, 26, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over the Shields reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,156,355) in view of the Wadsworth reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,737,089) and the Klimberg article (Arch Surg. 1990), and further in view of Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary (1997).

Applicants have amended the claims thereby overcoming the rejection. Applicants respectfully request that the obviousness rejection of the claims be withdrawn.

Claims 19, 26, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over Chandler (In Practice, 2002).

Applicants have amended the claims thereby overcoming the rejection. Applicants respectfully request that the obviousness rejection of the claims be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons discussed above, Applicants believe that claims 19 and 26-28 are in an allowable condition and respectfully request an early Notice of Allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if that would be helpful to resolving any issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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